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**The contribution of human resources development, including the areas of health and education, to the process of development**

## Draft ministerial declaration of the high-level segment submitted by the President of the Council on the basis of informal consultations

We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations participating in the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2002 of the Economic and Social Council, held from 1 to 3 July 2002, having considered the theme "The contribution of human resources development, including in the areas of health and education, to the process of development", the report of the Secretary-General on the subject, as well as the contribution of civil society, inter alia, through the NGO Forum, have adopted the following declaration.

1. We reaffirm that poverty eradication and sustainable development are the great ethical and human imperatives of our time. We reaffirm the right of everyone to education and that the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being, without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition.

2. We also reaffirm our commitment to the full and timely implementation of the goals, targets and commitments of the major United Nations conferences and summits and their follow-up in the areas of both health and education, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration.[1]

3. We recognize that human resources development is a fundamental aspect of poverty eradication and vital to the process of sustainable development, contributing to sustained economic growth, social development and environmental protection. Health and education are in turn essential to human resources development and should be fully integrated into macroeconomic policies, including poverty reduction initiatives, and should accordingly be prioritized in national budgetary allocations to health and education.

[1] General Assembly resolution 55/2.

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4. We recognize the important role of health and education professionals in all countries and their need to upgrade their skills. Training and retention of health and education professionals is a major challenge in particular in developing countries.

5. We recognize that people living in poverty must be placed at the centre of the human resources development process and encourage their participation in decision-making.

6. We recognize that better health and education go hand in hand, with progress in one area reinforcing progress in the other. To take advantage of that synergy, a multisectoral approach is needed. The mutually beneficial effects of health, education and other capacity-building approaches for development outcomes should be explicitly considered in the actual design and implementation of development strategies. To that end, we are committed to strengthening efforts at the national and international levels.

7. Good governance at all levels, sound economic policies, solid democratic institutions, freedom, peace and security, domestic stability, respect for human rights, including the right to development, the rule of law and gender equality are all essential for progress in health and education and mutually reinforcing.

8. We stress the need for gender mainstreaming in all human resources development policies and programmes to be able to effectively address gender inequalities. Gender equality considerations are essential to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes. Full and equal access to health care and education is fundamental for the achievement of gender equality. We reaffirm the goals, objectives and commitments contained in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[2] and also in the Political declaration and Further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-third special session.[3]

9. We also recognize that human resources development must begin with an investment in children. We call for timely and effective implementation of the declaration and plan of action adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-seventh special session.[4]

10. We reaffirm the need to provide access to effective and equitable primary health-care systems in all communities. We call for the full implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, as adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth special session,[5] and the other internationally agreed goals and strategies on malaria and tuberculosis (TB). The response to the epidemic must be through integrating prevention, care, support and treatment in a comprehensive approach. Recognizing that such implementation will require far greater human and financial resources (7 to 10 billion dollars targeted annually by 2005), we resolve to intensify efforts to mobilize those resources through increased allocations from national budgetary resources, increases in bilateral and multilateral assistance and the provision of substantial and additional resources to, inter alia, the Global Fund

[2] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.
[3] General Assembly resolutions S-23/2, annex, and S-23/3, annex.
[4] See General Assembly resolution S-27/2, annex, chaps. I and III.
[5] General Assembly resolution S-26/2, annex.

to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Consideration should be given to launching new partnerships and initiatives in such areas as prevention through education for HIV/AIDS and partnerships for affordable essential drugs. Increased attention must be given to maternal and child health and reproductive health.

11. We strongly encourage strategic research for and the development of necessary drugs and vaccines, particularly against diseases prevalent in developing countries. Increased investments are required in global health research and research capacity in developing countries. We encourage the pharmaceutical industry to make essential drugs, including anti-retrovirals, more widely available and affordable by all who need them in developing countries. Efforts should continue to ensure improved access to medicines and affordable health systems in line with the declaration on the Agreement on Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights and public health adopted at the fourth WTO ministerial conference held at Doha.

12. We welcome the work of United Nations agencies in addressing drug-resistant malaria. We encourage the stakeholders of the Roll Back Malaria and Stop TB campaigns to continue and intensify their efforts and call for full international support for their work. We stress the importance of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations, ongoing governmental programmes and other public-private partnerships that are effective in contributing to equitable health outcomes.

13. We reaffirm the commitments at the World Education Forum in Dakar that no country seriously committed to Education for All will be thwarted in its achievement of that goal by lack of resources. We will continue to mobilize political and public commitment and resources for Education for All. We recommend an integrated approach reaching beyond basic education, encompassing from primary to higher and technical and vocational education, early childhood development, girls' education, adult education and lifelong learning, to maximize the impact of education on development and poverty reduction. Alternative or non-formal education can contribute in ways that complement formal education.

14. We acknowledge that although the developing countries have the primary responsibility for the development of their human resources, the role of the international community and the multilateral institutions is essential in providing assistance to build human resources in developing countries. North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation can play a significant role in meeting the challenges faced by developing countries. We strongly encourage partnership efforts aimed at advancing health and education goals.

15. We also underline the importance of increasing the access of all people to modern means of communication and information and stress the need to improve access, thereby increasing the benefits of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to people in all countries, in particular developing countries. We underline the potential role of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in improving health and education services. We invite the United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Task Force and the World Summit on Information Society in 2003 and 2005 to pay particular attention to bringing the benefits of ICTs to people in all countries through human resource development.

16. We call for concerted efforts to significantly increase investments in health and education with the aim of providing access to health care and education to the persons living in poverty and vulnerable groups. We recognize that current levels of

investment in health and education are inadequate. We urge an increase in resources from all sources to provide adequate and sustained resources for effective programmes.

17. We recognize that a substantial increase in official development assistance and other resources will be required to provide adequate and sustained resources for effective programmes that will improve the quality of and strengthen the necessary delivery systems for health and education. We urge developed countries that have not done so to make concrete efforts towards the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) as official development assistance (ODA) to developing countries and 0.15-0.20 per cent of GNP of developed countries to least developed countries, as reconfirmed at the Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries, and encourage developing countries to build on progress achieved in ensuring that ODA is used effectively to help achieve development goals and targets. Recipient and donor countries, as well as international institutions, should strive to make ODA more effective.

18. We recognize that trade is one of the most important sources to foster development and finance human resource development. A universal, rule-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system, as well as meaningful trade liberalization, can substantially stimulate development worldwide. We also agree that external debt relief can play a key role in liberating resources that can be directed towards activities consistent with attaining sustainable growth and development, including in the areas of health and education. We stress the importance of facilitating access to and transfer of knowledge and technology on concessional, preferential and favourable terms to the developing countries, as mutually agreed, taking into account the need to protect intellectual property rights and the special needs of developing countries, with the objective of enhancing their technological capacities, capabilities, productivity and competitiveness in the world market.

19. We express strong support for Africa's new initiative, entitled the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), to achieve, inter alia, human resource development objectives.

20. We recall the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Monterrey, Mexico, including the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development.[6]

21. We call for further efforts to implement the commitments made for implementing the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010,[7] particularly those related to building human and institutional capacities.

22. We call on the United Nations system to strengthen its catalytic and supportive role in promoting human resources development in the areas of health and education. To that end, the United Nations system should continue and strengthen its efforts to:

(a) Support national, regional and global-level efforts to integrate human resources development programmes into poverty reduction strategies on the basis of

[6] *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[7] See A/CONF.191/11.

national ownership and priorities;

(b) Help countries build institutions and local technical capacity;

(c) Promote human resources development programmes that facilitate the access to information and communication technologies in all countries, in particular developing countries, to build digital opportunities;

(d) Build partnerships with stakeholders based on common goals and strategies and mutual responsibility and commitment and use sector-wide approaches;

(e) Strengthen mechanisms for disseminating knowledge and good practices for effective development cooperation in human resources development.

23. We stress the pivotal role of the Economic and Social Council in maintaining the focus on implementation and financing for human resource development as part of its responsibilities in the integrated and coordinated follow up of major United Nations conferences and summits. We call upon the Economic and Social Council to mobilize and promote a coordinated action by the United Nations system for implementing the present declaration.

24. We submit the present declaration to the General Assembly as a contribution to the follow-up to the major United Nations conferences and summits, including the Millennium Summit.